UNITED NATIONS

UNEP

BC

UNEP/CHW/OEWG.11/12

Distr.: General
14 May 2018

Original: English

BASEL CONVENTION

Open-ended Working Group of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal
Eleventh meeting
Geneva, 3–6 September 2018
Item 3 (d) (ii) of the provisional agenda*

Matters related to the work programme of the Open-ended Working Group for 2018–2019: international cooperation and coordination: cooperation with the World Customs Organization on the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System

Cooperation with the World Customs Organization on the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System

Note by the Secretariat

I. Introduction

1. In paragraph 2 of its decision BC-13/7, the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal requested the Secretariat to continue, under the guidance of the Open-ended Working Group, its cooperation with the Harmonized System Committee and relevant subcommittees of the World Customs Organization in order to facilitate the inclusion of wastes covered by the Basel Convention in the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System (Harmonized System) and to report on progress in that regard to the Open-ended Working Group at its eleventh meeting and the Conference of the Parties at its fourteenth meeting.

II. Implementation

2. As was reported to the Conference of the Parties at its twelfth meeting (UNEP/CHW.12/7), at its forty-sixth session, held in Brussels in November 2013, the Harmonized System Review Subcommittee considered a proposal by the Secretariat for amending the Harmonized System (UNEP/CHW.13/INF/19, annex IV) that had been prepared on the basis of information on the types of wastes submitted by the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of Peru pursuant to decision BC-10/10 (UNEP/CHW.11/9, annex). As described in the report on the status of work of the World Customs Organization on the Harmonized System related to the Basel Convention (UNEP/CHW.13/INF/19), after extensive discussions on the proposal at its forty-eighth session, held in April 2015, the Harmonized System Review Subcommittee agreed to focus its discussions on how to amend section XVI of the Harmonized System to allow for the classification of electrical and electronic waste. The Subcommittee also agreed that after working on

* UNEP/CHW/OEWG.11/1.

K1801169 080618

these amendments it would decide on the possibility of extending its discussions on this topic to other chapters and categories of waste.

3. Progress on the work of the Harmonized System Review Subcommittee regarding the classification of electrical and electronic waste undertaken up to its fifty-first session, held in December 2016, is described in the report on the status of work of the World Customs Organization on the Harmonized System related to the Basel Convention (UNEP/CHW.13/INF/19). During its sessions held in May 2017 and December 2017, the Subcommittee continued discussing possible amendments to the Harmonized System in relation to electrical and electronic waste. As an outcome of these discussions, the Subcommittee forwarded a proposal for the creation of a new heading to classify metal waste and scrap to the Harmonized System Committee for its consideration at its sixty-first session, in February 2018. The outcome of the discussions of the Harmonized System Review Subcommittee at its May and December 2017 sessions and of the Harmonized System Committee at its February 2018 session is summarized in document UNEP/CHW/OEWG.11/INF/34.

4. The sixth review cycle of the Harmonized System will end in June 2019. As described in document UNEP/CHW/OEWG.11/INF/34, the proposed amendments to the Harmonized System in relation to Basel Convention wastes currently under consideration by the Harmonized System Review Subcommittee would provide for the identification of two of the types of waste that were originally included in the proposal for amendment to the Harmonized System that was submitted by the Secretariat to the World Customs Organization in 2013 (UNEP/CHW.13/INF/19, annex IV), namely electrical and electronic waste and waste lead-acid batteries. Given the progress it has made thus far in discussing these amendments, it is unlikely that the Harmonized System Review Subcommittee will have sufficient time during the current review cycle to consider any of the other wastes that were included in that proposal.

5. If a conclusion is reached regarding the amendment to the Harmonized System in relation to electrical and electronic waste during the current review cycle of the Harmonized System, the Harmonized System Review Subcommittee could consider proposals for amendments related to other types of waste during the seventh review cycle, which is due to begin in the second half of 2019. In that regard, the Secretariat would benefit from guidance from Parties as to the types of waste for which a request should be made to the World Customs Organization for codes to be introduced in the Harmonized System and as to whether such a request should also be made for the types of wastes that were included in the proposal submitted to the World Customs Organization in 2013 but that the Harmonized System Review Subcommittee was unable to consider during its sixth review cycle.

III. Proposed action

6. The Open-ended Working Group may wish to adopt a decision along the following lines:

The Open-ended Working Group

1. *Invites* Parties to inform the Secretariat, by 31 October 2018, of the types of wastes covered under the Basel Convention for which it would be useful to request the World Customs Organization to introduce codes in the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System;

2. *Requests* the Secretariat to submit the information on the types of wastes received pursuant to paragraph 1 above to the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention for consideration at its fourteenth meeting.